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A SHORT
VIEW
OF THE
DIFFICULTIES
AND
DISCOURAGEMENTS

Attending those who enter into
HOLY ORDERS.

BY
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Rector of *Echingham* in *Suffex*.

— omnia ferre
Si potes, et debes — Juv.

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OF THE

DIFFICULTIES

STIMULANTS



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THE
PREFACE

I Don't question but that a Treatise of this Nature will be esteemed by a great many at this Time (when we see such Numbers crowding into the Pulpit) to be either a sinister or vain Attempt, and already confuted by Experience. For were the Difficulties and Discouragements real, they may imagine that the Effect of them would be quickly seen in the Paucity of Candidates for Holy Orders. The

A 2 Calamities

Calamities (they may plead) of those already in the Profession would give Warning to others.

This Observation tho' it be allowed to hold good in Respect of many secular Employments and Occupations; insomuch that (when the Number of Hands exceed the Demands; or any Failure abridge the Gains, and make it impossible for a great many of those, who are concerned in any particular Craft to get a comfortable Subsistence by it) general Clamours are presently heard, and as if even some Contagion had infected it; none are willing to engage themselves, or any of their Family in it. Yet must it be confessed, that hitherto its Influence has not affected the Ministry; neither has the Church been deprived of one Professor,

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fessor, notwithstanding that they have had as reasonable Grounds for Complaints, as any Body of Men whatsoever.

What this is to be imputed to, is not so easy to determine. I shall seek out no other Solution of this Matter, but what a very learned Man has given us,

“ While, says he, I resided at
“ Oxford, and saw such a Conflux of
“ Youth to their annual Admissions;
“ I have often studied and admired,
“ why their Parents would under
“ such mean Encouragements design
“ their Sons for the Church; and
“ those the most towardsly and capa-
“ ble and select Genius's among their
“ Children, who must needs have
“ emerg'd in a secular Life. I con-
“ gratulated indeed the Felicity of
“ your

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“ your Establishment, which attrac-
 “ ted the choice Youth of your Na-
 “ tion for such very low Pay: but
 “ my Wonder was at the Parents,
 “ who generally have Interest, Main-
 “ tenance, and Wealth, the first
 “ Thing in their View: Till at last
 “ one of your State Lotteries ceas’d
 “ my Astonishment. For as in that
 “ a few glittering Prizes, 1.000,
 “ 5.000, 10.000 Pounds among an
 “ Infinity of Blanks, drew Troops of
 “ Adventurers; who if the whole
 “ Fund had been equally ticketed out,
 “ would never have come in: So a
 “ few Dignities in your Church,
 “ Prebends, Deaneries, Bishopricks,
 “ are the pious Fraud that induces
 “ and decoys the Parents to risk
 “ their Child’s Fortune in it. Every
 “ one hopes his own will get some
 great

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*“ great Prize in the Church, and
 “ never reflects on the Thousands of
 “ Blanks in poor Country Livings.”*

This lets us into the Mystery, and at once discovers the Reason why the Church is so fully stock'd with Divines. The Parents hope and expect in a little Time to see their Children dignified: but when (upon Tryal) they have found their Hopes to have been fallacious, it is then that the Difficulties and Discouragements appear in their true Light; and what should have been foreseen, is by sad Experience felt.

To prevent the unwary from being surprized, and the Church from being burdened with those, who have no other Views, but of being supported by it, is the Design of the ensuing Discourse.

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It is very far from my Thoughts or Purpose to degrade the Office (for which I have the greatest Reverence and Esteem) neither would I for the whole World contribute (was I able) to the detaining sufficient Numbers from the Service of God, and by that Means make the Church destitute: Of which at present there seems to be no Danger. The Danger is rather from the reverse: For Supernumeraries there are at present, who might very well be spared: For whom since there is no Provision, there is therefore no Occasion for them. But now it is too late to remedy an Inconvenience so sensibly felt by many.

If I could therefore be at all instrumental in diverting for the Time to come (by laying the Difficulties and Discouragements before them)
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any from entering into this Sacred Office, who upon serious Reflection should be thought unable to encounter with them; If I could perswade those to seclude themselves, or rather their Friends to find out some properer Employment for them; from whom there can be little Hope or Probability of their ever being very serviceable to the Church; and if they alone would offer themselves for Admission, whose Abilities enable them to do Service, and their pious Resolutions prompt them to undertake it in Spite of all the Hardships they are like to meet with; If my Endeavours to effect this have but the least Success, my Intention is answered; and even if they have not, I have still the private Satisfaction of Meaning well.

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A SHORT
VIEW
OF THE
DIFFICULTIES &c.

IT will be allowed, I believe, that a more than ordinary Influence of divine Grace is not expected or requisite as a Qualification for the being admitted into holy Orders. When any offer themselves for these, they can't with any Truth affirm, that they are moved by any stronger or more sensible Impulse of the Holy Spirit than is common to themselves or to any other good Men in the

Exercise of christian Duties ; nor, if they had a Mind to deceive others with it, could they gain their Belief.

The Inducement which they have (allowing for the inward and ordinary Motion of the Holy Ghost which they trust that they have, and for some pious Resolutions) is the Consequence of their Education, and their being brought up and designed for this Office, even before they themselves knew what it was.

Our Church is neither stock'd with miraculous Gifts nor pretends to any. It suffices without them, if those that desire to serve at her Altars, come recommended for Regularity of Life, and bring along with them a requisite Portion of Learning: Which latter, small as it is, however qualifies according to Canon ; and is generally accepted of by the Governours of our Church: Tho' they have it in their Power, if they think proper, to refuse Orders without giving any Reason for it. But such is the unhappy State of those, who have been all along educated for this Purpose, (and this is all too many have to plead,) that should they be rejected, it would be
too

too late to turn their Hands to any thing else; their Fortune which might have enabled them to have done it, being already spent; and their Parents, Relations, and Friends being so much concerned in it, and their Hearts so much set upon it, that our Right Reverend Bishops very seldom make Use of their Authority without some legal Impediment.

Granting then that Orders may be sometimes had on pretty easy Terms, in Regard to the Article of Learning; and that therefore a Deacon is at length sprung up in the Family: Yet what mighty Prospect is there for the Youth thus barely furnished? If his Fortune is now to make, and his Title is his all, which is commonly the Case; that for the most part leads him into the Country, to some scanty obscure Curacy, just enough to keep him alive; and happy is it for him that he is thrown into some solitary barbarous Place, where his Audience is so well adapted to his Abilities. For here he may by weekly Labour, by plodding, and torturing and racking his Brains, squeeze out something, (whether coherent or incoherent, it is no Matter) which with
much

much-adoe (by changing and exchanging, and the Assistance of some necessary tho' very indifferent Helps) may be lick'd into the Model of a Thing commonly called a Sermon. From hence the Congregation is to learn the Importance of Religion; and oftentimes because they know no better, are pleased with and applaud their Preacher; especially when Nature, which has been sparing of Brains, has made Amends for that Defect in Lungs.

This, you will say, is a singular Felicity, and very lucky for him. But if the young Theologue should not be satisfied with this; but, fired with the Praises of his Congregation, should imagine that they are not much mistaken in him? and should therefore aspire a little higher, how can we conceive which Way his Ends are to be brought to pass? How can we trace him out any further? Those who have any Preferments in their Gifts (of any considerable Value) are very often judicious and discerning; and if they have no Relation, or particular Friend, or Dependant to oblige, they are then willing to oblige themselves; and to shew their Knowledge of Men, are generally

rally inclined to prefer one of Learning and good Accomplishments; that from thence some of the Credit and Reputation of the Clerk may be reflected on the Patron.

This, one would think should put a Check upon the aspiring Thoughts of my young Divine: Or if notwithstanding he will take his Level; it must be at something which his Betters have refused; and which if he gets, it is because Nobody else would accept of it. The Value of which we may easily guess, when even such Numbers of learned and very worthy Men are so meanly provided for.

I should descend further, and view him in this his accidental Benefice, and now in his Meridian, settled in the World, and beginning to think that it is not good for Man to be alone: But here I shall leave him; his Condition in this State being much better already described in a ludicrous Manner than I can do in a serious one.

However, as the Fault is not to be charged on the unhappy Sufferer, it being impossible for any one to correct natural Defects; this should be a Warning to Parents
not

not to engage their Children in this Sort of Education, 'till their Abilities have been impartially weighed by them themselves; or which is better without having first had the Opinion of those, who may be proper Judges of them. This is however little regarded! For too often the most unpromising Child of the Family is pitch'd upon; and he whom the Father thinks to be unfit for any thing else, is dedicated to the Service of God: By which we may guess at the Understanding and Piety of the Father, and presage the future Misery of the unhappy Son, and be sure to find him, where I before left him. Contemptible Ignorance and Stupidity as well as barbarous Cruelty to his own Child! What, does it require some extraordinary Talent to whoop after Bullocks and whistle after Sheep? a mighty Genius, to weigh a Pound of Figs, or to measure a Yard of Tape? whilst any thing will serve for the Altars of God. Pity is it and injurious to Society, that such fordid Parents should have the Disposal of and Authority to ruin their own Children! But I am heartily tir'd with this melancholy Scene, tho' it be a true Description

tion of the unhappy Case of many, who might perhaps have made very pretty Graziers or notable Handicrafts.

I confess that I have hitherto been dealing in Dreggs, and drawing out the Prospect only of Incapables; the Burdens of the Church, and very often it's Reproach and Scandal. These therefore may be thought Exceptions; and the unlucky Star reigning at their Birth to have been in Fault; but that every thing goes smoothly on with those, whose natural Capacities are suitable to the Task they undertake. I wish it was so, and that there were no Ruggs in their Way; but since there are I shan't hide them.

To begin with the Studies of those who are capable of them, for to be capable is nothing without Application. A Power to move without actually putting himself into Motion will never bring a Man to his Journey's End. He therefore that designs to take Holy Orders, and would rightly qualify for them; (so far as to commence a Workman that need not be ashamed) must with uncommon Diligence bend his Mind to the Study of the three learned

C Languages;

Languages, the *Latin*, *Greek*, and *Hebrew*; for these are the Keys to Knowledge; and he that thinks to open the Lock without them, will find himself much mistaken, as he likewise will, if he does not set about these betimes. For it has been seldom found, that they who begin to learn a Language at the Meridian or Decline of Life make any great Proficiency, or become skilful Professors of it. But here I must beg not to be misunderstood; as if I meant that it was expected of a young Student at the Age of three and twenty to be a perfect Master of these Languages; I only mean that he ought to make what Progress he can in them (along with his other Studies) before he comes for holy Orders; that hereafter he may go on with the greater Ease.

And what wearisome Days and watchful Nights does this Undertaking require? what deep Meditation and Recollection to treasure up Words in the Memory, and to store it with the Knowledge of Things? how often must he beat them over, separate, divide, and digest them, before he will be ready in calling them forth upon Occasion?

Occasion? or be able to express himself, elegantly, clearly, and judiciously?

Little enough for this Work is the greatest Part of his Time! and many Diversions must he maugre, to which Youth are naturally inclinable; the most ingenious as well as others: For the quicker the Taste, the stronger the Appetite; and the brightest Parts are not always the fittest for Application.

Be that as it will; Adherence is absolutely necessary; and they that set light to it, be their natural Talents ever so good, they will never supply the Defects of Idleness, or gloss over their Ignorance: Which if it does not appear in downright Stupidity and Dullness, it will however shew itself in Pertness and in palpable Blunders and Mistakes.

Fully for this Reason must the most promising Youth resolve, either to be content not to shine in the Church, or to be industrious.

For so far will he be (without it) from being intitled to any Manner of Applause and Reputation, that he will only add one more to the Number of Possibilities.

Norwithstanding the Truth of this, as if Idleness wanted Patronage and Encouragement, the learned Languages are commonly talked of and represented as dead Languages; and that by those who (for their own Sakes) should have been silent, and conceal'd their own Shame; and not have declared their Ignorance of them by this Expression, upon which to put the right genuine Interpretation; it is that the Representers are dead to the Languages, and to all good Intents and Purposes in Respect of their Profession.

What the learned Languages dead and useless to Clergymen, to whom is committed the Custody of the Law and the Prophets, the Gospels and Epistles?

Is there not a peculiar Idiom belonging to all Languages, more particularly to the *Hebrew Tongue*; and are there not some moral and political Words in the *Greek*, to which none answer in other Languages and which are hardly to be fully express'd in them? Or can the Sense and Meaning of any Author be so exactly understood in Translation, as in the original Language in which it was wrote?

If

If this is manifestly the Case in Respect of the holy Scriptures; what notable Commentators should we have without understanding *Greek* or *Hebrew*? They would soon verify the Parable; *Can the Blind lead the Blind? shall they not both fall into the Ditch?*

To silence therefore this senseless Pretence; let us for once suppose, that a general Infatuation had seiz'd on the most learned Part of the *English* Clergy; and that they were all fallen from their present Glory, and the Reputation which they justly have all over *Europe* for their Skill in all Parts of Learning; fallen so far, that there was not one of them left, who had any Manner of Knowledge of the *Greek* or *Hebrew* Tongues. What a fine Piece of Work would the Freethinkers and Libertines of this Age make with the Holy Scriptures, and consequently Religion? who, tho' but Smatterers in Languages, yet when they had only *Ignoramus's* to deal with, they might interpret as they pleas'd and slip any thing upon the Church. For should they affirm that such and such Passages in the Translation of the Holy Scriptures

tures were spurious and false and quite contrary to the Original (and what would be more likely than for them to do this) who under such Circumstances could contradict them?

The Church, so ably supported with Learning as it is at present, can scarcely prevent these Miscreants making some Profelytes, amongst the giddy weak and luxurious; but take away this Support, it must of Course sink, and a Torrent of all Manner of Errors and Vices would soon break in like a Deluge upon us; and if they could prevail so far; we should soon have the Doctrines of *Epicurus* established by Law, and fathered upon the Scriptures.

But the Danger from that Quarter would not be the only one to be feared; for what if the Papists should get the Custody of the Scriptures again? I mean of the original Languages in which they were wrote? might we not in a little Time expect to see twelve more new lucrative Articles of Faith tacked to *Pope Pius* his Creed? They might pawn as they would upon us, if they did but pretend that they found

found them in the Original, and clamour loudly against our Translation, as partial and defective; for there would be no other Remedy than recurring to the Original; but this would not be in the Power of our Clergy to do.

Is it not therefore absolutely necessary for those who wish Prosperity to our Church and Religion, and design to engage themselves in the Ministry, to prepare themselves for it by Labour and Study, as much as may be before they enter upon it; and afterwards likewise to continue the same? And this I would recommend to the timely Consideration of both them and their Friends; whether they think they will be able to undertake this and go thro' it; and even to persevere to the End of their Lives, or so long as their Faculties remain entire.

There is Nothing to be done without it; for the greatest Genius cultivated as it ought (thro' the short Time of Life allotted) is not able to reach to, or comprehend all Parts of Science, or scarcely to finish or clear up one: Which takes away all Pleas for Laziness, and baffles the Sufficiency

ficiency of some, who perhaps have the least Reason of any to pretend to it. For was there any allowable Excuse to justify this in one, the same would allow it to another, and so at last to all; which would of Course draw after it the Consequences I a little before repeated. One Clergyman might plead his Right to Laziness another his and so all, 'till at Length Religion would be left to shift for itself.

Which Observation every Clergyman who is a Well-wisher to true Religion ought to apply to himself, and to consider (tho' the Church at present may thrive well enough upon the Stock of Learning which the great Men of it to their Honour possess) that it is but a mean and beggarly Thing to take Shelter under the Merits of Others. For should no Emulators of their great Accomplishments hereafter arise, we should soon see Religion brought to a very low Ebb: And even whilst these great Lights remain amongst us, what Numbers of Congregations in the mean Season (whom their Influence cannot reach) must suffer and be in the Dark, unless their Guides (to whose particular

ficular Charge they are committed) take Care to enlighten themselves and then their Flock.

When the Care of Souls becomes the Undertaking of any, their Labour and Industry ought (as far as possible) in all Respects relating to them to be proportionable to the Worth of them. Nor can the Ignorance and Meanness of those with whom they are entrusted ever be a reasonable Excuse for their own; because they are sent on Purpose to clear up their Blindness and Errors; and if they don't strive as much as they can to effect this, they do but trifle in their Office, and show themselves unfit for the Task they have undertaken.

Every one therefore that is lawfully allowed to be put in Trust with the Gospel ought to lay his Hand upon his Heart and seriously reflect on the Duty incumbent on Him; and if it should happen to be his Lot to attend upon the weak in Understanding, he should on that Account be so far from despising them, or from thinking that he has then Freedom to indulge, or that any thing tho' ever so

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mean will serve their Turns, that instead thereof he ought to double his Diligence, and take more than ordinary Pains in shewing them the right Paths in which they ought to walk. This is the Duty of a good Clergyman, and the End of his Office, and every one that is in earnest will think so, and act agreeable thereto.

For whatever some may think, or even by Experience find, that there is no Necessity for all this Pains and Trouble, since there are easier and shorter Ways (and in some Respects more meritorious) of getting at what they may set their Heart upon; yet let me tell them, that many of those Ways are dishonest and dishonourable; bring Contempt upon their Order; and, whilst true Merit is wanting, make them secretly despised even by those whose Designs they are carrying on. For Nothing is surer, than that a good Stock of Learning, Integrity, and Virtue joined with a prudent Conduct are the only true Recommendations, and which alone can command Applause, Respect, and Esteem.

It is by these that the Affections of the sober and judicious Part of the Laity are riveted

riveted in the Favour and Love of the Clergy and good Opinion of Religion; and it is by these that even from the prophane and injudicious Part of them a secret Reverence is drawn.

All Men are apt to admire those of exalted Abilities and superiour to their own. Truths displaid and defended by such Advocates enter deep into the Hearts of the Hearers; the Convictions of their own Minds can't fail of drawing their Assent to them: And whether the Want of such Endowments has not very often given Occasion both to the Contempt of some of the Clergy and Religion, I will leave every one to determine as he pleases.

The Generality of the better Sort of the Laity (whatever may be thought of them by some) neither want Learning, good Sense, or kind Inclinations. They are as quick-sighted as any whatever, are as good Judges of Men, and pleased with Merit whenever they find it; but if thro' Neglect or Supineness the Clergy sink below their proper Standard they must not expect to conceal their Ignorance and Meanness, nor think themselves injured, if

Respect is withdrawn from them; since, when the Case is thus, they are not unjustly dealt by; for the Laity then have a Right to Resentment and to complain; their Interest is concern'd; the Relation which the Clergy stand in to them as spiritual Guides will be their Justification. For if a Gentleman might justly censure and condemn his Lawyer or Physician who should puzzle his Title to his Estate or endanger his Life thro' Blunders, much greater Reason has he to think meanly of those who are so ill qualified to take Care of his Soul, which is of infinitely greater Value. But to have done with this:

Let us then suppose a due Application and Improvement to have been made; and that the young Divine sets out in the World with all laudable Accomplishments; and that he is upon the Stock of these alone to make his future Fortune. Being thus prepared I will not send him down into the Country to a Curacy (tho' that is the Lot at first of many worthy and deserving young Men) but will bring him into the World, and place him in the Way to Preferment; amongst the great, the rich

rich, and distinguish'd Part of Mankind; and who are likewise able to distinguish Merit in others and have Power to reward it.

Let him be fix'd then in the Metropolis! It may be thought that now I have got him here, I may design to list him among the City Drudges. Nothing less I can assure you! I have more Regard for Merit.

In this desirable and happy Situation, being stocked with a sufficient Portion of Learning, Rhetoric, and Eloquence, it is likely e'er long (by an artful Management of them) that he may attract the Eyes of his Superiours; and that they may begin to look upon him as a Person that ought to be taken Notice of. The expected and lucky Hour now approaches, and the young Man is pitch'd upon perhaps to be Chaplain to some great Man, that a single Patron may engross all the Merit: Or if he happens to be more popular than ordinary, the united Voice of Numbers may compliment him with a Lectureship in Town. Let us then survey him in both these Situations; whether he have the
one

one or the other, as likewise in their Sequel.

First then we will suppose him taken into the Family of some great Man for his Chaplain; that is as one who is to look after the Concerns of Religion in the Family; a spiritual Steward, who by Virtue of his Office is as much oblig'd to take Care of my Lord's spiritual Affairs, as his temporal Steward of his Estate; and is not to let him or his Family (without Warning or thro' his Neglect) squander, or keep behind hand too much with Heaven, and run into Arrears; because some Time or other he may be called to an Account for it if he does. If we suppose a Chaplain without this Privilege, he is but a Cypher; and like a Piece of old Plate in a Family, which serves only to adorn and grace a Side-Table, but is of no further Use.

But fancy for once that my Lord should not be in a Disposition for Prayer, and that he may have so much Business in this World, that he may not have Leisure to hear any thing about another; and that it would be thought impertinent and be
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in vain to talk any thing to him about it; and that his Family (willing to imitate so shining an Example) might think themselves likewise better employed. I don't know of any Remedy in this Case, but being content to say Grace (if he can prevail so far as to do this) when my Lord dines alone: For at publick Times, I suppose it of Course, it being Part of the Pomp.

O happy Change of Times! for he may not only say Grace, but sit down at Table too; and that for the most Part as long as others. This then has silenced the Wits and bilk'd them of their Satire; and they would be glad, now the Tables are turn'd, to exchange their Jokes for some of the Desert.

No, he does not withdraw, and creep about like a Thief in a Corner, and watch the Table narrowly, 'till some compassionate Guest condescends to slide him a Sweet-meat; but with a modest Mein, fingers among the rest; tho' it must be confess'd that the Doubtfulness of his Title abates some of his Assurance; it being
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rather by Courtesy than by Right that he takes.

At other Times, if he is a Man of some tolerable Address, he may be permitted to help to spend some of my Lord's retired Hours; and here the Foundation of his future Fortune is to be laid. If his Conversation pleases, and his Demeanour strikes his Patron's Fancy, his Business is done; and happy is it for him, if this comes to pass free from Incumbrances; and no contracted Stains pollute his Virtue, nor any poor Female Relation of the Family or favourite *Abigail* blast his promising Hopes.

Some very good Benefice we will suppose then is designed for him; and that when it falls he is put into Possession of it; and that (as a good Shepherd partly careful of his Flock, and partly tir'd with Attendance and Dependance) he goes down and resides upon it.

All Cares, now his Wants are supplied, may be thought at an End; And that he has nothing more to think of (along with his Duty and his Studies) but the Enjoyment of himself. This one would think
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very reasonable, and what might be expected; but for all this there may, and in all Probability will be an unexpected After-Game. Is he sure of his Dues after he has got his Benefice? That he has a legal and just Title to his Tithes (as clear as any Man has to his Estate or Goods,) is most certain; and likewise as good a Remedy for the Recovery of them.

In short is there not some one or more sturdy, covetous Peasant in his Parish? The short Character of whom, take from Dr. South; who says, *Nothing is so rude and insolent as a wealthy Rustick. En nostri Fundi Calamitas!* The Caterpillar that will either eat up Part of your Tenths, or destroy your Quiet! and put you to Difficulties in recovering that which you have a better Right to than he has to what is in his old leathern Purse at Home: If this Harpy (thro' the Negligence, Want of Skill, or Timidity of your Predecessour) has set his Claws (for several Years) into one Part out of three of the Tithes in his own Occupation; by having shuffled him into some easie Composition; either by having abus'd his Credulity, or by

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any other fraudulent tricking Way: You may as well venture to take a Lamb (ravisht from your Flock) out of the Mouth of a Wolf, as to meddle with this old Sacrilegious.

Handle him but ever so gently and he cries out he is pinch'd: And that you are rapacious and greedy; and that if you don't take Care he will be even with you: And it is ten to one, but that he is so: For a whole Volume would hardly contain all the little Arts these Misers invent (at the Instigation of their Malice) to effect this; and therefore I shan't trouble you with a History of them.

But abating the Uneasiness which must sometimes arise from this ill Usage; yet what a hopeful Prospect have you of the Success of your Ministry? What a mighty Influence will it be sure in particular to have over this old Cormorant? Who if alone, it would not be so much Matter; but because of his Circumstances, you can't expect him to be without Dependants and Adherents, and perhaps a pretty many too. For take this for certain that the Merits of the Cause will not be examined

examined into; and it is more likely that the Sheep will follow one another (even tho' a scabby one is their Leader,) than that they will follow their Shepherd.

This then you see may be some Check upon your promising Hopes of future Ease, Satisfaction, and Quiet. But happy would it be for you was this the only Impediment. For what if you should find in your Parish a pretty large Collection of Protestant Dissenters? You may be very sanguine and laugh at this indeed; and ask what Danger is there from such conscientious Men? Before, it is true, when you had to deal with one whose Conscience Avarice had devoured, some Evil might naturally ensue; but in the present Case, it is not likely: For with whom could we wish to have Commerce sooner than with Men of so much Purity? I wish your Security does not entangle you. Would you like to have so many Spies upon all your Actions? This you may judge to be so far from being any Inconvenience, that it will be an Incitement to you to have a stricter Guard over yourself; and, by that Means draw Advantage

from what looked untowardly at first. But will Innocence be always a Protection to you? Or was ever Man so innocent as not to be guilty of daily Slips? These Failings, then to which human Nature subjects us all, you may expect to have blaz'd abroad and perhaps magnified; and this too out of religious Zeal, and in order to make Profelytes.

For no Men are more diligent that Way than these our Protestant Brethren: And there is no Way more likely for them to gain their Ends by, than by undermining you in the good Opinion of your People. For even the Vulgar pretend to be Judges of Mens Actions; will decide upon them, tho' they are far from being able to judge of the Merits of the Cause in Dispute between the Dissenters and us. By this Means then you see you may in all Probability have some of your Flock purloin'd from you: And this I am sure you would not very well like. For some Mortification it must needs be to see them exult and triumph with Joy over any of your poor converted Sheep, tho' ever so mean and ignorant.

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But you may imagine that a little wary Conduct may place you upon better Terms with them; and a little Condescension bring you nearer together; and that you are not too stiff they will like you the better. Now you begin indeed to be something nearer the Matter; and to shew yourself to be a Man of a calm Head; and promise fair to be popular in Time: For to become all Things to all Men, is very engaging. I suppose then to please them, you will in your Discourses or Writings model the Sacraments according to their liking, throw down Inclosures, level the Pastors of the Church of *Christ*, and tell them that the Differences between them and us are only nominal. This indeed would be obliging, might merit their Attention a little, and would make them begin to think that you was a Man of some Grace. But if this is all you would do, they would hardly believe you to be thoroughly in earnest: Nay they would think that you had more of a Courtier in you than a Primitive Christian. For what true Value could they have for such a lukewarm Advocate as you, even if you
was

was a Prelate, whilst you set fast in your Stall, and won't surrender it, or Part of it, as well as your Principles?

They will compare you to a Man that looks out of his Window from a warm Room in cold Weather, and sees several poor Objects starving without, and cries out I have a good Opinion of you; be warm my Brethren, but will not admit them in as Partners to share with him in his good Fire.

I don't know what can make the Dissenters think themselves more treacherously dealt with than such Usage, since it is directly striking at the Root of a darling Doctrine of some of them, which is *that the Saints should inherit the Earth.*

This double Dealing then won't long serve your Turn. They will smell you out in Time, and think you as bad as the rest. For if you will only undermine your Gospel Right, but still hold your legal Right; how are they the nearer to the Ends they aim at? Either then don't be quite so complaisant, or be more so, and give up all at once, and then you will get rid of all your Troubles together; but
if

if you are not willing to do this I must leave you here to manage as well as you can: Or if you are tired of it I will bring you into Town and view you in a Lectureship.

Some peculiar and winning Endowments (where so many are concern'd) must have brought this to pass: But what they may be by Name I shan't further enquire.

I can't give him better Advice in this new Station than that of *Horace*,

— *Servetur ad Imum*

Qualis ab incepto processerit. —

The same Spirit which gained him Favour at first, must be maintain'd, if he has a Mind to keep it.

Men of all Professions, of all Ranks and Conditions will be his Audience here: And therefore Matters must be carried with a very even Hand: And no Reflections levelled; no Vices publicly reproved (tho' absolutely necessary to be so) which any considerable Part of his Congregation may apply to themselves; that is if he has a Mind to have the same good Graces continued with which he sets out; and if he can be withal content to

part

part with his Integrity and Hazard his future Happiness for the Sake of them.

I have heard (but the Case is not exactly parallel because it was upon his Preaching upon Approbation) of a Man (who afterwards made a very good Figure in the learned World) that lost one of these Lectureships in Town, for chusing these Words for his Text, *let him that stole, steal no more*: And if I am not mistaken the major Part of the Electors at that Time were Vintners and Taylors.

Caution and Circumspection are therefore requisite, and if a Man have a Mind to please, that Saying, *that the Truth ought not to be spoken at all Times*, can never be more applicable than in his present Station: If it was not for that necessary Thing called Duty.

We have all heard of the Court Chaplain, who thought it ill Manners to mention Hell and Damnation in the King's Chapel. Such harsh Words he might imagine would sound oddly in such illustrious Ears; they might indeed (in his Opinion) be proper enough in some mean inferior Congregations, where the threatening to send them

to the Devil, might be the only Way to keep them from him: But the Great, the Rich, and Powerful (it may be he thought) would take it amiss at his Hands, should he alarm them with Terrours and Threatnings.

Where there are such Numbers of People, as are to be seen in some of the Churches in the City; a great Part of whom abound in Wealth, with which we all of us are too apt to be intoxicated: And amongst whom (notwithstanding they meet in the same Place) there are such great Diversities in Opinion, that I don't know a harder Task than a Lecturer (I'll say Incumbent, whom I take to be on the same Foot in several Respects) has to adjust nicely these Difficulties; and to behave himself with such Discretion so as not to offend. They indeed that can so moderate Matters (without sinful and base Compliances) are unusually happy; but if this is not their Lot, and some are offended only perhaps because they will be so; then does the Town presently ring with bitter Reproaches and Invectives; and their Doors and their Purses too are im-

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mediately

mediately shut, and no Entrance to be had but upon legal Demand.

But, Courage; this perhaps may never happen. Nay more, your Company may be welcome amongst them, wherever there is good Cheer to be found; and the Doctor may be expected to be there to sanctify the Feast.

Here will open to us one of the most ridiculous Scenes we have hitherto met with, and which will require some Management too. Have you never seen at these Invitations a little pert Fellow in a laced Waist-Coat or perhaps plain, newly arrived perchance from abroad, or perhaps lately redeemed from behind the Counter by the Death of some Relation who had no more Sense than to leave the Blockhead a plentiful Fortune to spend? If you have not already seen him, it is odds but you will find him at one of these merry Meetings.

You may go all the World over, and not meet with so ridiculous an Object as this is; unless it be of the same Species and Shape.

This Thing, who does not know where he is, or what he is; or how to take one
regular

regular Step: Yet being naturally dully pert, and perhaps told by his new Footman, or his old sedentary computing Comrades or others, that it is high Time for him to set up for a Gentleman; he begins to be of their Mind; and because a Gentleman should have something besides the Benevolence of Fortune to distinguish him from the Herd; he therefore sets up for a Wit too. And what so fit to set out with, as with the Contempt of Religion and the Clergy? Take Care of yourself therefore, or he will be upon you. He will so Doctor you about, that you'll have scarcely Time to put one Morfel into your Mouth without being ask'd some impertinent Question. Or he will fling at the Bottle-Screw, or *nolo Episcopari*, (if he has learn'd to sound the Words) or some other trifling stale Topick, which I should be asham'd so much as to mention, could I think of these Reptiles without it.

But hold a little; perhaps he may have got the Names of some of the Articles of Faith or some of the Ceremonies of the Church; I mention the Names, because I can assure you that he knows no more of

them or their Meaning than he does of one Word in the *Latin* or *Greek* or any other Language but what his Mother or Nurse taught him.

Granting all this; yet how do you think to manage with this Animal? You will say, I suppose, being a Man of Learning and Sense, that you heartily despise him. There's Reason in this I confess; but will this stop his Mouth? Or are there not sometimes in the Company, some who are as weak and vain as himself; and who being void of good Sense and good Manners may be pleas'd with his Ribaldry and Impertinence, and may therefore laugh heartily at it? Or are there not even some sober, wise and thinking People in Company with you, who may nt be entirely averse to this Babling? You may think that they have too much Wit to be pleas'd; and so they have to be pleas'd with the Man, they having the same contemptible Opinion of the Wretch that you have. But are you certain that all this while they don't laugh in their Sleeves? For to see a proud Priest mortified (which is the common

mon Appellation) is very bewirching, let it be done how it will.

Tell me now if you fit altogether easily notwithstanding? Or whether some of your Satisfaction is not abated? If it is not, you have a mighty Frame of Spirits; for most Men tho' bark'd at by the most pitiful little Mongrill Curr are under some Concern for their Heels; and the Braying of the As is disagreeable, tho' every one knows the Nature of the Beast.

This then is an Evil which will for ever haunt you in the City. Nothing is so common as these whifling Creatures about Town. They are as constant at Entertainments, as Flies at the Shambles.

But you will say, are not the great Men of our Church a Sovereign Antidote, even against all Degrees of this Sort of Vermin? Do not the *Hare's*, and *Bentley's*, like Sunbeams acting on Pestilential Vapours disperse and make clear all around? So far I will agree with you that nothing can be keener than their Penns, and that they are Terrors to all the scribbling Part of the Fraternity; but the Bablers are left to the inferiour Clergy. If you can find a Remedy

medy for these, you will exceed the whole College of Physicians: For when the Pineal Gland is disordered they are all at a Loss where to cut to make a Cure. You must therefore at last turn them over amongst the incurables, as such virulent Scabs in the Body Politick, which Dr. *Ward* himself (was he in your Condition) would hardly venture to undertake.

I must not forget another Part of the inferior Clergy, and those of them too, who promise the fairest of any for an Exemption; I mean those of great Families and good Fortunes of their own, and who are therefore Independent.

These I confess are as happy, as they that have got Cloaks in rainy Weather, when others have none. But when the Storm hangs heavy over their Heads, it is odds but they will feel some of the Damp.

A Bungler can never gain Credit in any Profession; nor can a Journeyman atone for the Master's Defects. If then they will take (as they in Conscience ought) the Duty and Service of their Function upon themselves, they must have the same
Quali-

fications with others, and use the same Labour to attain them; or expect to become Objects of Ridicule and Derision; and the more too on the Account of their Distinction.

Every one will be inquisitive, and ask how it comes to pass (if they can have any Plea for the Question) that one who might have liv'd comfortably without the Revenues of the Church, should thrust himself into it only for the Sake of them? So far then are such from being at Liberty to indulge, or to be indolent and negligent in their Office, or in the qualifying for it; that they have rather a Spurr to it beyond others; because they may be suppos'd to be in the fairest Way to the highest Preferments of the Church. To aim at which without all the laudable Qualities necessary for them, would be a Reproach on themselves; and if they should get them would be such a Stain on the Church, as none who have any Regard to any thing further than themselves would be willing to throw upon it. For all those who have a true Love for Religion or our Church, wish to see none in the highest Stations of
it,

it, but Men remarkable for Learning, Orthodoxy, Morality, and Integrity. Such Men alone can be its Ornament, Credit, and Support; who rather cast a Lustre on their Office than their Office on them; and if such are to be found amongst those of high Birth and Fortune, and they are placed at the Head of the Church, it is still an Addition to its Glory.

Our Church therefore with open Arms embraces Youth of Rank and Distinction, who are willing to enter into it; and are drawn by the true Motive (which ought to induce any to it) the Love (which they have for the Service of God and Religion. But we live in an Age sunk below the Standard of former Ages, and in which a great many are unacquainted with the History of them. I mention this because it is the easiest Thing in the World to prove, that Men of the greatest Families in all Kingdoms, and in all Religions have been Priests. But in our polite and refined Times it is accounted (by a great many) some Disgrace and a Lessening to a Gentleman; and it is well for him, if he can keep up his former Rank after he has taken
this

this Character upon himself. The Cause of this you should enquire after, and ask them to give a Reason for their Opinion; it must be this or they have none, *viz.* That it is a Disgrace to be more immediately employed in the Service of the great God of Heaven and Earth.

It is pleasant to observe, what a Value some brutish senseless Clowns set upon themselves; I mean by Name, your rural Esquires the useless debauched and dreggy Part of them only; those of them who have been educated in the Stable or Dog-Kennel; and whose Capacities and Habits are (agreeable to what they have been brought up to) mean and low. Be not surpriz'd! Yet forsooth a Priest (tho' of Family and Fortune, and adorn'd with all the fine Accomplishments which Nature and a generous Education can bestow on him) must look to himself, that he be not elbowed by these: And it would be taken very much amiss I can assure him, if he should be so bold as to assume the Preference; or so much as an Equality with them.

But I shall lastly take a View of those of my Brethren of the Clergy who are

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immured

immured in Colleges, and have at present few of those forementioned Difficulties to struggle with: And happy would it be for them, if they had none to encounter. But such is our Fate, that there is no secure Refuge for us.

Penury we all know is a Demon which haunts these Walls: And well would it be for them, if Syllogisms and Metaphysics could satisfy their Appetites and support Nature; but I am afraid they will be found to be too subtle for that Purpose.

By far the Majority of the Fellows of Colleges are in Circumstances below Envy; infomuch that it is surprizing to find that any should grudge them the poor Pittance they enjoy; or should think that College Lands might be canton'd out to better Uses. For if Learning is the greatest Ornament, nay Support of a Nation: And if the Universities are the Fountains from whence are chiefly derived all the Benefits which flow down to the Nation in general by it: If the three learned Faculties are from hence so ably supplied, that Religion in its Primitive Purity is preached and propagated, that Justice is with so
much

much Skill and Impartiality maintain'd and distributed; and also that the Preservation of our Health and Recovery of it is so well provided for: We may conclude that none but those who are Enemies to Mankind in general can be Enemies to these learned and venerable Bodies.

But whilst all these Blessings are conveyed from hence, a great many of the learned Sages residing there, and from whom they spring, are very poorly rewarded for their great Labour and Study. What they have at present bears no Proportion to their Merits: And if hereafter any thing happens in their Favour, it is generally too late; not 'till overmuch Study has exhausted their Spirits, and Want of Health has disabled them from Enjoyment.

Besides their constant and assiduous Application to Books has taken their Thoughts off so much from the World, that they are but little acquainted with it: Insomuch that when they come out into it, they are for the most Part ill prepared to struggle with the Difficulties, they are like to meet with. They are Strangers to all the little Tricks and Artifices, the Windings and Turnings

of those with whom they are likely to have Commerce; and may not suspect there to be any latent Guile in those whose Appearance is so mean and unpromising: Yet tho' it may appear something like a Paradox, many a Man of the greatest Learning, Sagacity, and Penetration has been most abominably impos'd on, and defrauded in worldly Traffick; by those whose Capacities are but little superiour to some Brutes: The Thoughts of the one being wholly taken up with higher and more noble Contemplations, and the others confin'd only to the Invention of little Shifts and Disguises.

It may be expected perhaps (now I have finished what I designed in Respect of the inferiour Clergy) that I should go on, and survey the superiour Clergy, and make some amends for what I have already done: But that I shall defer 'till I have seen the Success of this Undertaking.



T H E
C O N C L U S I O N.

TO confirm the Truth of what I have asserted, I appeal to Observation and Experience, and call upon living Witnesses and Sufferers to bear Testimony; of whom I am afraid that there are too many to be found, more by a great many than I could wish, and whose Calamities I heartily lament. Whose Calamities are owing to ungenerous Treatment; to a wicked and perverse Humour in some of the Laity; Part of whom are seduced by a vitious Avarice and Covetousness; and others by a vain and suspicious Dread of Emulation or they dont know what; and both of them fighting against divine Authority
and

and Dispensations, and defying the Armies of the living God.

Reasons for this we are to expect none; neither can any be given. For if at least the Majority of the Clergy (without Flattery) bear Characters for Abilities in their Function, Inoffensiveness of Behaviour, and Integrity of Life, superior to most Men, inferior to none; what is there to be urged in Defence of such barbarous Usage? Envy could it ever cease, it should be then, when it sees Men in Distress. Could Slander be ever silent, Innocence should strike it dumb. But wicked and vain Men are Proof against human and divine Admonitions, and nothing will reclaim them.

However, (Coxcombs of every Education being first excluded) to their Honour will I speak it, that the greatest Men, I don't mean by Birth only, but who are great in themselves, and whose noble natural Endowments and innate good Dispositions have been improved by a University Education, are very seldom guilty of Ridicule and Male Treatment; or if at any Time they give into the first, their Wit and Humour in some Measure atones for

for it: There being as much Difference between the Treatment of these, and that of your proud, ignorant, rich, splenetick Fellows, as there is between the fine Hand of a skillful Chirurgeon, and the course Mangling of a Butcher.

Unreasonably troublesome it is very true that these latter are to their Betters; but if Good could be once brought out of Evil, and they should serve at last as Scare-Crows to keep off from the Church, such as might otherwise be more usefully employed, I must confess that I should then have a something more favourable Opinion of them than I have hitherto had. But if we can't make this Use of them, we shall be troubled to account for them, and may say as the honest Cheesemonger said by the Rats, I wonder for what use these Vermin were made.

Enough I hope has been said to lessen the Number of unskillful Traders in Divinity, and to keep them from venturing when they are sure to meet with Storms, and to be disappointed of their imaginary Gains.

Nothing

Nothing however of this Nature will affright the pious and ingenious Youth from this his designed Undertaking. He knows that God into whose Service, he enlists himself, is able to protect him, and therefore resolves to serve him faithfully; and as he hopes to be able to do him better Service this Way, than any other, he expects a greater Reward for it; but not till his Service is ended; not till the proper Time for it comes, and therefore waits patiently for it.

He calls to mind the Dangers, Oppressions and Persecutions of old, and even which have all along attended those who have been strictful faithful and diligent in the Service of God; and as he in no wise expects to be exempted from all of these, he is the less surpriz'd and dejected on that Account when they happen to him.

Transported with the glorious Figure which the Martyrs and Sufferers make in the Annals of the Church, he has an honest Ambition of being enrolled (if called upon) amongst their Number. Their Characters shining brighter in his Eyes than all the glittering Trophies of your
Alexanders

Alexanders and Cæsars. The one having had for their Foundation a fervent Zeal for the Service of God; the others a vitious Ambition which lead them on to Rapine, Sacrilege, and Murder.

A Heathen or Infidel may indeed applaud the false Glory of the latter; but the Christian Hero views their black Crimes with Horrour, and disdains any Conquests but in the Service of God, and the Defence of true Religion.

The Ambition of the Youth that enters into the Ministry with an honest Heart, is to encourage and promote Piety and Virtue and all Manner of good Works; and to perswade as many as he can to the Practice of them that they may be thereby happy and God from thence be glorified; and if this is brought to pass thro' his Means his Desires are satisfied and he reflects on himself with greater Pleasure, and is much happier (even amidst Calumnies Abuses, and the Pressure of a low Fortune) than if by base Compliances and Propheying smooth Things he had attained to the highest Dignity. Not

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that I think a Steadiness in his Duty to be an absolute Bar to Preferment; because that (with some forementioned Qualifications) is in my Opinion the only true Title to it; and I hope that the World is not yet so degenerate as generally to think or act otherwise. However Preferment is not the strongest Byass of a truly good Clergyman; for one who really is so, is content without it, or pleas'd with it according as he finds it inconsistent or consistent with his Duty. The Discharge of which is the ultimate End which he aims at in this World, and the Rudder which directs all his Actions. Could the Church be always filled with such, she would soon become the Praise of the whole Earth. And all true Lovers of our *Sion* will join with me in my hearty Wishes, that she may never more want such.

F I N I S.

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